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LETTER DATED 4 MARCH 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that violations of Iraq's airspace by United States, British and French aircraft continued over the period 16 to 28 February 1997 and that the aircraft in question carried out reconnaissance and engaged in acts of provocation, as set forth in the annex hereto.

You are requested to intervene with these countries with a view to bringing a halt to actions that, as flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, pose a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq.

These actions continue to alarm the civilian population and to cause serious damage to private and public property. The Republic of Iraq affirms its right to seek legal compensation for the damage being inflicted on the Iraqi people and the Iraqi State by these actions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Violations of Iraq's airspace and damage caused, 16-28 February 1997

1. In the northern region 82 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres, over the following Iraqi cities and towns: Mosul, Irbil, Dohuk, Tall Afar, Amadiyah, Zakho, Ayn Sifni, Aqrah and Badush.

2. In the southern region 606 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres, over the following Iraqi cities and towns: Qurnah, Kut, Nasiriyah, Samawah, Rumaythah, Salman, Busayyah, Jalibah, Artawi, Amarah, Chabaish, Lasaf, Hayy, Hamzah, Basra, Najaf, Ushbayjah, Suq al-Shuyukh, Hillah, Taqtaqanah and Diwaniyah.

3. On 13 occasions United States TR-1 reconnaissance aircraft flying at speeds of 600 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 20,000 metres violated the Republic of Iraq's airspace in the southern region before leaving in the direction of Kuwait.

4. At 1014 hours on 18 February 1997 a formation of United States aircraft broke the sound barrier over Umm Qasr in Basra Governorate.